

Forum

Angola: 'Peace at last'

All persons of African descent throughout the world, and all persons who are committed to justice and peace, are celebrating the fact that the struggle for peace in Angola has finally been won. The people and government of The Peoples Republic of Angola are to be saluted for their valiant and long-lasting

In particular, the President of Angola, H.E. Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, should be congratulated for his successful and courageous leadership. During the signing of the Peace Accords, President Dos Santos stated, "This is an occasion of great joy and emotion because the formal signing of these Accords

and in cities and towns throughout the country. The joy of peace is now being translated into a "democratization process." It is our hope that finally the people of Angola will secure this strategic African nation so that greater empowerment and stability will come to the entire southern African region.

We are aware that there are still some outside political, economic, and military powers which are prone to continue to attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of Angola against the interest of the Angolan people and government. For those of us who live here in the United States, we must continue to raise our voices and energies in support of Angola's right to choose its own future without intimidation from the West or the East.

The victory of the people of Angola is a victory for peace and justice for all of the peoples of the world. The international community must now respond to the economic developmental needs of Angola. This nation not only has the potential to be "the bread basket" for all of southern Africa, but also Angola has the potential, in spite of the devastation of war, to be one of the leading African economic forces of the 21st century.

Elections do not automatically bring democracy. The new spirit of peace with respect, dignity, and sovereignty in Angola today is the fundamental formula from which Angolan democracy and prosperity will continue to evolve. We must do all that we can to help out sisters and brothers in Angola because their struggle continues to be our struggle.

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By BENJAMIN F. CHAVIS JR.

sacrifices to achieve a lasting peace without compromising their national sovereignty and right to self-determination.

After throwing off 500 years of Portuguese colonialism in 1975, the people and the government of Angola have had to endure 16 years of brutal attacks from separate and combined armed forces of the racist apartheid regime in South Africa as well as attacks from so-called Unita rebel units led by Jonas Savimbi who is a client of the United States.

On May 31, 1991, in Lisbon, Portugal, Peace Accords were signed between the government of Angola and Unita. The United States and the Soviet Union served as observers and encouragers of the peace process.

The government of Portugal served as the mediator. As of this date, the peace process appears to be holding and the cessation of warfare in and on Angola has been halted.

enshrines the beginning of a new era of peace and concord in Angola. I am sure that sentiments, which are being experienced by all Angolans, are shared by the international community as a whole, which believes in the fundamental values of humanity."

President Dos Santos further emphasized, "At this solemn hour we pay a heartfelt tribute to the memory of those who sacrificed their lives so that the country could remain an integral entity, and the dignity and independence of the Angolan people could be upheld. Thanks to their example, we have overcome many domestic and external obstacles. We have brought together diverse goals and emotions and adopted a general strategy which led us to placing the Angolan case within the context of the existing southern African conflict."

When news of the Peace Accords reached Angola, tens of thousands of Angolans danced in the streets of the capital city Luanda

Prejudice, bias need monitoring

Not long ago, as temporary host and guide to a group of seven or eight West African journalists (all men) visiting the United States, I took them on a tour of approximately 200 miles along Florida's Gulf Coast.

We stopped for lunch in the small town of Carrabelle, and when we entered the restaurant, I recognized it immediately as one in which blacks would not have been welcome just a few years ago. But on this day, everyone was very down-home, pleasant, courteous, and patient. In fact, they pampered us.

As we were placing our orders, one asked for wine, which the restaurant did not serve. However, the manager told my guests that they were welcome to buy wine at the liquor store across the street and bring it back to the restaurant. Two went for wine and returned shortly with a supermarket-type grocery bag with what I thought was enough wine for a large reception. It amounted to about two bottles (fifths) for each.

And while we waited for our food, these men, all in their 20s and with three to four wine bottles on each of our four tables, attracted much attention from the other

curious restaurant patrons, all of whom were white. They were very fluent in English, but when talking among themselves they spoke in their native Portuguese, and in

he was right. There was at least one church within every half mile we traveled, and they were just the ones along the roadside. I knew there were many others we could



AGAINST THE GRAIN

By ROOSEVELT WILSON

addition to loud, lively conversation and boisterous laughter at each table, mine was the only one at which English was spoken, occasionally.

I never saw such drinking in my life, and frankly, being a teetotaler in addition to knowing how blacks have been stereotyped, I was embarrassed and just wanted to disappear under my table.

I got no consolation when one told me that where they were from, drinking wine and having good clean fun at mealtime was a custom. Later, when we were continuing our drive, one asked me, "Why do you have so many churches? I see one on almost every corner."

I hadn't thought about it, but

not see. Our having so many churches was just as strange to them as their behavior in the restaurant was to me.

And I got embarrassed all over again . . . and a bit upset, but this time with myself for having felt embarrassed in the restaurant.

I was upset because I realized that I had been thinking just like a hard core racist; I had not been rational. I had permitted myself to be blinded to the simple truth that these men were just different, and differences — be they in custom, culture, race, or religion — are just that: differences, and the term implies neither good nor bad, better nor worse . . . unless we, as I had done, let our prejudices and biases replace our common sense.

How white quotas work for the rich

The Democratic version of the 1991 Civil Rights Bill, which passed by the House without enough votes to override a certain veto, is a sadly watered-down piece of legislation aimed at women, reli-

themselves from blacks. The concern about protecting blacks is as such a low ebb that black concerns, once the lynchpin for civil rights, is now a political pothole in Congress. The focus of this year's civil rights

blacks through affirmative action programs. Quotas are on everyone's hit list because, unlike goals and timetables, they set a specific number, often hiring the unqualified and even fixing the progress of the preferred group to a fixed number.

Rep. Weber's convert message is that there is no longer a political "downside" to being against preference programs for blacks. Furthermore, it has gotten so bad that even the government is ignoring laws already on the books to help blacks.

A two-year law specifying the use of black and Hispanic firms in managing the billions of dollars in assets seized from the failed savings and loans has been almost completely ignored.

The Resolution Trust Corporation, the agency in charge of implementing this bailout legislation and rescuing some of the billions of dollars of taxpayer's money in the S&L



TONY BROWN

Syndicated Columnist

gious minorities, and the disabled and blacks.

What has become even more apparent is that a viable anti-discrimination bill needs to be designed to protect the rights of blacks. It is also becoming increasingly apparent how the hated quotas work for whites.

Both President George Bush and the Democrats have launched anti-quota campaigns to distance

is "mainstream white women," according to the D.C. Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton.

"The average white American believes civil rights legislation is preference legislation, not fairness legislation," said Rep. Vin Weber, (Rep.-Minn.). There's no longer "a substantial downside to voting against civil rights," he boasts.

This is largely true because of the use of quotas to hire more

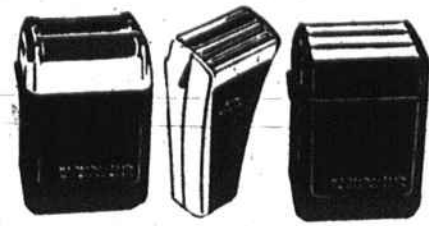
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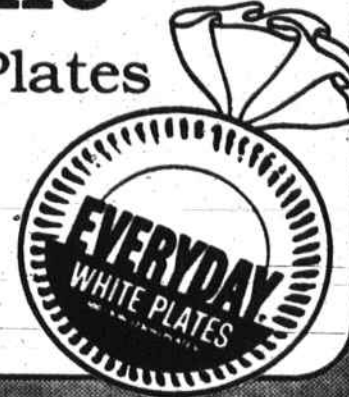
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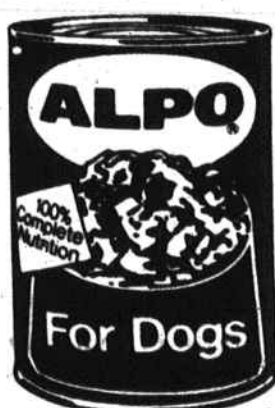
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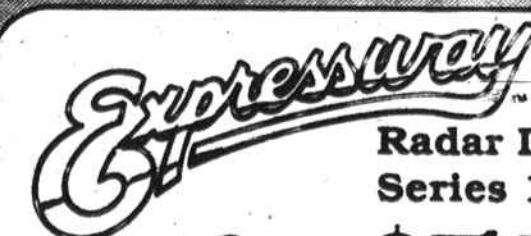
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